

PRESS RELEASE

Gila County Attorney's Office

1400 East Ash Street
Globe, AZ 85501

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Daisy Flores
Gila County Attorney
Phone: (928) 425-3231 ext 8630
Fax: (928) 425-3720

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

CONTACT: DAISY FLORES, GILA COUNTY ATTORNEY

WHAT: Officer Recognition Award Ceremony

WHEN: February 1, 2011 10:00 A.M.

WHERE: Gila County Supervisors' Hearing Room, Globe Arizona

WHO: Payson Police Department Sgt. Joni Varga received the
 Quarterly Officer Recognition Award from Daisy Flores, Gila
 County Attorney

Four times each year, the Gila County Attorney's Office recognizes a member of the Gila County Law Enforcement community for his/her superior service in the prosecution of criminal matters. The County Attorney reviews numerous recommendations, but selects the officer who at the time best illustrates an exemplary attitude and work ethic.

Gila County Attorney Daisy Flores has announced her office has recognized Sgt. Joni Varga, from the Payson Police Department, as the Officer of the Quarter. The Officer of the Quarter award was presented to Sgt. Varga on February 1, 2011, during the Gila County Board of Supervisors' meeting in appreciation of her service, professional attitude, and assistance to the County Attorney's Office.

Sgt. Joni Varga was hired by the Payson Police Department in September 1999, as a 911 Police/Fire Dispatcher where she served the department until August 2002. She was nominated and won the title of Tele-Communicator of the Year in 2001. Sgt. Varga then began her service to the department as a certified patrol officer in December 2002. She served in the investigations department from 2009 before she was promoted to Patrol Sergeant and continues to serve in that capacity.

Sgt. Varga maintains many additional duties in addition to her supervision of a patrol squad. She has been involved in the development of the "How To Avoid False Alarms" brochure and the "New Business" brochure. She served as the Citizens Academy Coordinator in 2009 and served as a Citizen's Academy Patrol Functions representative in 2007. She has maintained the "Watch Your Car" and "VIN Etching" vehicle program since 2006. She served as an instructor with the Payson Police Department Police Academy in 2007 and has been involved in training through CARLOTA, acting as a role player. Sgt. Varga also assisted the ALECA K-9 Trials in 2006 and 2008. Even with all these extra-assigned duties Sgt. Varga continues to maintain a squad of patrol officers that produce high-quality law enforcement service to our community.

Sgt. Varga was the case officer in the recent trial in State v. John Patrick Kelly, wherein the Defendant was convicted of defrauding a number of individuals and businesses in the Payson area. Sgt. Varga took the initiative to investigate what appeared to be a "civil dispute" over failed payment for promised goods and her investigation led to the discovery that it was much more than a simple civil matter. Thanks to her efforts and follow through, she uncovered the Defendant's scheme to defraud several Payson area businesses. Sgt. Varga even assisted in uncovering the Defendant's similar acts in other Gila County jurisdictions, including Pine and Star Valley. She was a solid witness on the stand during trial and without her diligent investigations and convincing testimony we could not have been able to ensure justice for the victims.

Sgt. Joni Varga is a shining example of an officer who exhibits excellent law enforcement poise and work ethic. It is with great honor that the Gila County

Attorney's Office acknowledges Sgt. Varga and we commend her for her hard work and dedication to our county. She is an asset to the Payson Police Department and serves as a worthy example of quality law enforcement.